Vicars and Squires: Religion and the Rise of the English Marriage Plot

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Reading *Sir Charles Grandison* soon after its publication in 1753, Mary Wortley Montagu famously remarked, "Richardson is so eager for the multiplication of [marriages] I suppose he is some parish curate, whose chief profit depends on weddings and christenings."[1] Her mock complaint—steeped in a routinely Whiggish anti-clericalism—points toward a fresh line of inquiry for novel studies, namely that mid-eighteenth-century English novels that placed marriage at their center did so with ecclesiastical ends in view. Most historicist work on the rise of the novel has understood its setting in sociological terms, through concepts like the growth of the middle class or of liberal individualism, or as an aspect of associated regimes of gender, sexuality, family, and domesticity.[2] In these terms, scholars have generally assumed the English novel develops its marriage plot within processes of modernization and secularization.[3] Relatively little sustained attention has been paid to dimensions of the marriage plot that cannot be read progressively: its genesis in Samuel Richardson's novels as a High Church missionary project emphasizing proper ceremony, for instance; the distinctly male, public, and gentlemanly concerns of its earliest practitioners; or its insistence on the centrality to the social imaginary of the rural landed estate and parish presided over by vicars and squires.

This essay makes the case that the English novel's turn to nuptial themes in the 1740s has not been adequately accounted for, and that the political and religious settings from which the marriage plot first acquired its purpose and meaning in English fiction remain to be explained. Primary amongst those settings, as I have argued elsewhere, are the tense relations between the Anglican church and the British state in the period following the Constitutional Settlement of 1688, and the ongoing civil and ecclesiastical debates over marriage regulation that were enacted within the state-building program of the Whig hegemony subsequently formed.[4] From this perspective, I will argue, the marriage plot emerged in mid-eighteenth century fiction that critiqued the Court-

Whig government's impact on social, cultural and religious life, and that used the trope of vicar-squire rivalry to reference shifting church-state relations. In its earliest, most controversial iterations—in Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and Henry Fielding's, *Joseph Andrews* (1742)—the marriage plot develops both as an agent of the Erastian state, and more concretely, as an expression of a dispersed and highly labile conservative opposition.

THE ENGLISH MARRIAGE PLOT

Let me begin with some questions of definition since the term "marriage plot," although sometimes taken for granted within novel studies, is somewhat ambiguous. In the simplest terms, it refers to any narrative that ends, or almost ends, in a marriage or marriages, and is largely concerned throughout with courtship. What I wish to term the "English marriage plot" of the eighteenth-century novel, however, cannot be reduced to these purely formal features since narratives ending in happy marriages had been commonplace in comedies and romances for centuries, and across many languages. In prose they reach back at least as far as Longus's second-century *Daphnis and Chloe*, as Margaret Doody has observed.[5] Nonetheless the modern English marriage plot is not simply a mode of, for instance, Aristotelian comedy, or another of the various kinds of early modern prose fiction romance that often ended with a marriage (Charlotte Morgan long ago listed seven such kinds).[6] To take just one instance, Eliza Haywood's first novel, *Love in Excess* (1719), concludes with no fewer than three marriages, a multiplication of the convention that suggests its purely formal function in this case, since at this stage of her writing career Haywood was interested less in marriage *per se* than in the narrative horizons of illicit love and passion.

The modern English marriage plot belongs, rather, to what was in effect a new subgenre of the novel, first developed by Richardson, who famously called it "a new species of writing"—a term quickly used for Fielding's fictions too.[7] Walter Scott, in his short biography of the novelist in 1821, authoritatively summarized the terms in which Richardson's innovation came to be understood:

> Hitherto, [i.e. before Richardson] romances had been written, generally speaking in the old French taste, containing the protracted amours of princes and princesses, told in language coldly extravagant, and metaphysically absurd. In these wearisome performances, there appeared not the most distant allusion to the ordinary tone of feeling, the slightest attempt to paint mankind as it exists in the ordinary walks of life—all was rant and bombast, stilt and buskin. It will be to Richardson's eternal praise, did he merit no more, that he tore from his personages those painted vizards, which concealed, under a clumsy and affected disguise, every thing like the natural lineaments of the human countenance, and placed them be-

> fore us bare-faced, in all the actual changes of feature and complexion, and all the light and shade of human passion.[8]

This is wholly characteristic of the nationalist, modernizing lexicon in which Richardson was first canonized. We can note that Scott pays no attention to form: he does not even mention that Richardson's novels are epistolary. And his assertion that earlier works were "in the old French taste" is misplaced (though common enough when Richardson himself was writing), especially since prose fiction writers before Richardson, and most notably Daniel Defoe, often claimed to offer faithful depictions of the world (or rather of "History") in contradistinction to flights of heroic "Fancy."[9] Indeed, the decades before the publication of Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* in 1740 saw an extraordinary amount of prose fiction experimentation by women writers in particular—Aphra Behn, Delarivière Manley, Mary Davys, Penelope Aubin, and Eliza Haywood—who are now rightly regarded as pioneers of the modern novel, establishing many of the women-centered and domestic concerns that will indeed be relayed into the marriage plot.[10]

Yet Scott's analysis as a whole is not merely to be dismissed. Richardson's novels are closer to the "ordinary walks of life" than earlier amatory fiction: they are written in the vernacular, they are more psychologically detailed and more able to excite readerly passion by empathetically engaging readers in characters' lives. The excitement, delight, and controversy with which they were first received attest to that.[11] Unlike most characters in earlier prose fictions, Richardson's are not merely allegorical moral types, or agential functions upon which to hang a loosely connected series of adventures, seduction scenes, or japes. Nor, at least in terms of major life events, are they in thrall to an external world ordered providentially: here the epistolary mode entails a particular form of narrative temporality, the sheer succession of letters expresses time as a succession of news, which allows a new sense of contingency and interest to enter the récit. Furthermore, Richardson's characters' moral agency, and its development and exemplification as expressed in the letters they write, wholly controls and frames his plots, which, as a result, become relatively streamlined, their formal devices being economically harnessed to a single thematic aim. This means that Scott does not quite account for the features that mark Richardson's *Pamela*, in particular, as a "true original," to use John Richetti's phrase.[12]

More particularly, from the perspective of my argument, *Pamela* thoroughly reorganized the narrative structures that it inherited by taking full advantage of the epistolary mode's removal of extra-diegetic narration. It did so to concentrate on its characters' negotiations over the religio-moral issues that arose within everyday life when unlicensed sexual desire intersected with marriage's (putative) monopolization of licit sex—all this at a time when marriage's loose legal framework was producing scandals that soon were to allow it to fall under state control. Furthermore, Richardson's characters renovate literature because

they are both writers and ordinary people. It is as if, in their long, sometimes brilliant letters—so often centered on questions of whom to marry, how, and when—they were expanding the possibilities available within literature. More concretely, they were expanding literature via their particular temporality and ordinariness, by intensifying its interactions with the social.

It is in these rather various and complex terms that *Pamela* contains a marriage plot in a new sense. It is the story of a rich, conventionally libertine, squire, Mr. B., who, after various efforts of cynical seduction, falls in love with and marries his virtuous and literate servant, Pamela. This story allows the novel's action and characterology to be organized in the interests of a larger social meaning which, as Ian Watt long ago noted, depends on its presentation of a marriage capable of legitimating or transforming both its characters' social status and their inner selves.[13] Admittedly, in *Pamela* marriage marks an interpretative closure rather than a narratological one, since the story continues for many pages after its central characters marry. This allows Mr. B. and Pamela to engage a number of post-marital, domestic challenges. But narratological and interpretative closure, marked in a wedding that legitimates simultaneously social status, states of feeling, Christian virtue, and moral worth, will increasingly coalesce in fictions written after 1750. More than anything, this coalescence defines the English marriage plot and arguably marks its stabilization in Jane Austen's fiction by the century's end.

VICARS, SQUIRES, AND WEDDINGS

The regulation of marriage became a matter of ongoing debate in eighteenth-century England from within the governmental structures set in place after the downfall of the Stuart monarchy, which, of course, was when the Established Church lost its claims to independent sovereignty, coming under the control of parliament. In the context of the 1688 Constitutional Settlement, the Whigs established a form of weak Erastianism, in which the state supported the Anglican Church while other Protestant denominations were nonetheless "tolerated." This new regime was resisted by the Tory-aligned Anglican clergy, a small group of which (the "non-jurors") refused ever to acknowledge it. Tories emphasized not just the independence, but the spiritual vitality and orthodoxy of church life, based primarily in rural rather than urban England, which (as Linda Colley has helped us realize more broadly) was also seen to form the basis of Englishness itself.[14] But after 1714, when the old Tories lost power forever, these ideas became difficult to sustain and in the process they became increasingly imaginary, slowly being channeled off into literary fiction itself, most notably, I would argue, in the form of the novel's new marriage plot.

Lord Hardwicke's 1753 Marriage Act was one of the Court-Whig legislative reforms through which the new church-state accommodation came to affect everyday life practices most powerfully. Triggered by concerns that the eccle-

siastical courts had failed to prevent the growth of clandestine (or irregular) weddings, which threatened property, the Marriage Act marshalled the full might of state power and statutory law to enforce Anglican ritual. It meant that, with the exception of Quakers and Jews, it became impossible to be legally married in England without undergoing an Anglican wedding ceremony on consecrated ground during appointed hours, now buttressed by a raft of bureaucratic and punitive measures including strict procedures for banns, licences and registration, transportation sentences for parsons in violation of the Act, and, in the case of minors married by licence without the written consent of their parents or guardians, nullity provisions that allowed the state to override the church-sanctioned vow.

Nothing was more expressive of the church-state alliance as implemented by the midcentury Whig state, than Hardwicke's legislation. Henry Fox, the Act's most vocal parliamentary opponent, remarked that it extended the "great spider of the law" into wholly new territory, a critique that was joined by High Church Tories who believed that the State had no business controlling a sacred Christian rite, as well as by populist Patriots and radicals who argued that the Act shored up oligarchy by creating barriers to unions between the rich and the poor, and indeed, by curtailing marriage amongst the population at large.[15] Moreover, by establishing the Anglican priesthood as the sole celebrants of state-sanctioned, registered weddings, the Marriage Act harnessed the core unit of local government—the parish—more firmly to the state.

The parish was, as W. M. Jacob notes, "the basic unit of local government" in eighteenth-century England.[16] It was also the key context within which vicar-squire relations unfolded. Parish membership was, in the first instance, native: one belonged to a parish by virtue of being born there. This meant that one was an *English* subject as born into a parish. In these terms, the parish was central to the control of itinerancy and poor relief, but it could also be exploited as a privileged signifier of Englishness itself, as we shall see.[17] Parish governance was formally based on communal participation: it was controlled by a vestry, elected by ratepayers, which levied fees and provided local services including roads, poor relief, church repair, and so on, many of which would later be absorbed by the central state. The vestry also possessed juridical powers, levying penalties against indigent itinerants and disciplining transgressions such as "fornication," habitual drunkenness or, more occasionally, regular failure to attend church.[18] In practice, however, the vestry was very often effectively under the control of the local squire, simply by virtue of his position as the primary landowner.

The parson, by contrast, attended to secular matters with the vestry, but in theory at least, his duties were primarily devotional and pastoral. Many parishes were served not by beneficed vicars but by so-called "curates," who had been ordained but had not acquired their own living, working instead for an absentee priest in a practice of clerical outsourcing known as pluralism. Cu-

rates and incumbents performed mostly the same tasks, if at rather different levels of remuneration. Typically, they celebrated at least one service on Sunday at which they gave a sermon. In a few instances, they also offered a service on weekdays (Fielding's Parson Adams does so but only his wife and clerk attend). The priest catechized parish children and provided lay services such as transcribing wills and letters. He also visited, and often tended, the sick in lieu of professional medical aid. For a fee, he churched, baptized, and buried his parishioners, and after 1754, as we have seen, he, and only he, married them.

In many parishes, particularly rural ones, the church was the centre of local communal life where it functioned, minimally, as the regular meeting point for villagers for whom neither a modern public sphere nor a modern leisure culture existed. In such cases, the weekly sermon was the main source of news and commentary on the larger world for many parishioners, bridging, as it were, local to national circuits of information. The church was also a source of intense community pride, and, through its burial ground and parish records, a repository of local memory. All this meant that the parish could accrue considerable ideological significance. In particular, because rural collective life was primarily organized around the parish, and because so many clergy remained Tory in the years following the Constitutional settlement, both country parish and parson became key tropes for the oppositional imaginary.

Yet, at the same time, the eighteenth-century rural clergy was itself the focus of increasing religious and social critique. To begin with, tension between the interests of the parish as an administrative unit and the parson's spiritual and pastoral vocation were exacerbated by measures like the Marriage Act, which, of course, used parish and priest as tools of state. The period also saw a narrowing of the social constitution of the clergy: vicars became increasingly connected by family to the gentry and increasingly self-reproducing (by the century's end, about half of all clergymen were sons of clergymen), and they joined the civil magistracy next to secular landowners.[19] The power of government over church affairs encouraged Whiggishness among sectors of the clergy, and pluralism (viewed as a form of Anglican decadence) became a public concern. Among the less well-connected ranks of the clergy, on the other hand, poverty and difficulties in finding preferment led to the formation of what Joseph Addison famously called a "subaltern" clerical class, many of whom turned to the disreputable clandestine wedding trade.[20] As skepticism about the Church's spiritual vocation mounted, efforts toward revivalism, or ultra orthodoxy, became more common. In effect, the spiritual authority of the Anglican Church was compromised by its connections to commerce and statecraft, and this situation, along with the threat of deism, is generally understood to have contributed to the growth of non-parish-based evangelicalism from the 1730s on. When John Wesley turned his back on Anglican secularity (and, indeed, the Toryism of his roots), for instance, he famously declared the world to be his parish.

It was a situation, too, that motivated the literary trope of vicar-squire rivalry,

which became central to an important strain of the mid-century English novel. Richardson is the first of several novelists—Fielding and Oliver Goldsmith included—who presented narratives peopled by, amongst others, learned, unworldly vicars, and godless, libertine squires so as to reference Anglicanism's spiritual crisis and England's supposed loss of moral direction under Court-Whig rule. And while the vicar-squire trope was not new, Richardson put it to fresh ends by inserting it into the machinery of the fictional marriage plot. The trope's origins lie in two key texts written, as we might expect, in the wake of the 1688 settlement. The first is John Dryden's influential and much admired "The Character of a Good Parson," a Tory appropriation of Chaucer's "The Parson's Tale," published posthumously in *Fables, Ancient and Modern* (1700).[21] The poem, composed during the 1690s when Dryden, a Catholic, had retreated from public life, modeled its image of clerical virtue on the non-juring Anglican bishop, Thomas Ken, who gave up place and profit in loyalty to the Stuart crown and thereby remained an exemplary figure for Tories until well into the nineteenth century.[22] Dryden's panegyric harnessed the nativist appeal of Chaucer's England, and of the pre-Reformation (or "true") Church. It styled Ken as a High-Church hero ("an awful, reverend, and religious Man," able to "withst[an]d" the might of "Prince[s],") *and* as a figure of Christ-like humility ("Rich was his Soul, though his Attire was poor; (As God had cloath'd his own Embassador.)")[23] Key among the poem's interlocutors was Joseph Addison, who crafted his own fictional description of vicar-squire relations precisely as a means of figuring, at the level of rural parish life, an Erastian refutation of Dryden's parson-focused Tory polemics. Addison's revisionist model is worth considering at length because it establishes a template for later literary representations of the vicar-squire trope, including Richardson's.

In July 1711 Addison wrote a series of essays for *The Spectator*, in which Mr. Spectator, the periodical's narrative voice and personification of its Whiggish metropolitan values, makes a week-long visit to the country where he stays with his friend, Sir Roger de Coverley, a guileless Tory country squire.[24] Mr. Spectator's reports on his visit deal with, among other things, relations between Sir Roger and the parson of the local parish whose living he controls. In doing so, Addison describes Sir Roger as a "good Churchman" who "has beautified the Inside of his Church with several Texts of his own chusing: He has likewise given a handsome Pulpit-Cloth, and railed in the Communion-Table at his own Expence."[25] This places him among those landed gentry, often Tory, who, like Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison and Mr. B. under Pamela's influence, are engaged in restoring sacral aura to church interiors after the period of puritan iconoclasm and de-ritualization of religious worship.[26]

Sir Roger, however, has chosen a particular kind of parson (who is never given a name) for the benefice in his gift, a "Clergyman rather of plain Sense than much learning, of good Aspect, a clear Voice, a sociable Temper, and, if possible, a Man that understood a little of Back-Gammon."[27] The apparent in-

congruity of the skills listed here is characteristic of the gentle irony with which Sir Roger and his affairs are treated. Harsh critique of Sir Roger's criteria for selecting a parson is avoided because, from Addison's perspective, a certain diminution of the parson's spiritual vocation and responsibilities—even his familiarity with backgammon—is what enables a proper and effective relation between him and the patron who supervises and, in this case, carefully controls his pastoral duties. And for Addison, as a Whig, that supervision and control by the squire of the vicar is proper insofar as it mirrors the Church's relative lack of political and social autonomy. Thus it is Sir Roger who provides the parson with copies of "all the good Sermons which have been printed in English" (with Tillotson's Whiggish, and indeed Addisonian, sermons leading the list), one of which the parson is required to read to his parishioners each Sunday so as to offer "a continued System of practical Divinity" over the year.[28] This course of action, which privileges circulated print over original oral discourse, is enthusiastically endorsed by Mr. Spectator.

But the clergyman's real value to Sir Roger is still more functional and secular than this: Sir Roger tells Mr. Spectator that "there has not been a Law-Suit in the Parish" since the clergyman arrived.[29] Indeed by means of his weekly services, the parson orchestrates nothing less than a local civilizing mission:

> It is certain the Country people would soon degenerate into a kind of Savages and Barbarians, were there not such frequent Returns of a stated Time, in which the whole Village meet together with their best Faces, and in their cleanliest Habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent Subjects, hear their Duties explained to them, and join together in Adoration of the supreme Being. *Sunday* clears away the Rust of the whole Week, not only as it refreshes in their Minds the Notions of Religion, but as it puts both the Sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable Forms, and exerting all such Qualities as are apt to give them a Figure in the Eye of the Village. A Country-Fellow distinguishes himself as much in the *Church-yard*, as a Citizen does upon the *Change*; the whole Parish-Politicks being generally discuss'd in that Place either after the Sermon or before the Bell rings.[30]

This account of the Sunday service's functionality within the community is particularly multilayered. Primarily, the service creates civility by enforcing physical hygiene and mutual self-display, its religious aspects reduced to a mere, deistical "Adoration of the supreme Being." But it further enables a rural and local version of something like a Habermasian public sphere where the civil and rational discussion of parish politics replaces legal wrangling. And on occasions where Sir Roger's choice of a sermon fails to inspire the parishioners, it is Sir Roger who takes charge: it is he who wakes up parishioners who fall asleep during the service (while nonetheless prone to napping himself). Indeed nobody dares stir until he is "gone out of the Church," and his departure down the aisle is a ceremony of collective deference, his tenants serially bowing to him as he passes by.[31]

The Spectator's attitude towards Sir Roger and his parish organization is, then, a complex mix of affection and distance. Certainly Mr. Spectator himself (and hence the periodical's implied reader) is much more intellectually sophisticated than Sir Roger and his parishioners. Furthermore, Mr. Spectator's relation to the countryside is wholly different from that of its inhabitants since it demands of him no responsibility, attachment, or labor. For him, the rural setting is an object of study and reportage as well as an occasion for proto-romantic inspiration. In one walk through the woods, he sublimely loses himself and is inspired to embark on an extraordinary and barely-Christian theological meditation in which the afterlife becomes a proving ground for the progressive quest of perfection, with which, on this enlightened account, we are all already engaged in the mortal world.[32]

Yet for all this advanced theological metaphysics, the curious blending of Tory re-sacralisation with a Whiggish Erastianism that characterizes Sir Roger's leadership of his parish is, as I say, by no means under critique. This becomes completely clear when Mr. Spectator compares Sir Roger's parish to a neighboring one, where "the Parson and the 'Squire . . . live in a perpetual State of War," where the Squire does not attend Church, and where, therefore, the Tenants are "Atheists and Tithe-Stealers."[33] Mr. Spectator reflects philosophically on the need for the Squire to play a key role in parish affairs. These days, he claims, "ordinary People"

> pay as much Deference to the Understanding of a Man of an Estate, as of a Man of Learning; and are very hardly brought to regard any Truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several Men of five hundred a Year who do not believe it.[34]

That is to say, in England now, authority derives from wealth and property—including, in some cases, money made from commerce—rather than from learning or religion. This needs to be recognized as the case even in rural parishes, where, as a consequence, "Adoration of the supreme Being" primarily serves the purposes of social order.

As I suggested earlier, it is hard not to read these *Spectator* papers except as in dialogue with Dryden's "The Character of a Good Parson." Dryden's parson, granted considerable autonomy and spiritual ambition, cherishes established doctrine and despises "worldly pomp." His kingdom is not that of this "world below," and he is committed to poverty and charity in emulation of "primitive" Christianity.[35] More pointedly, he asserts "the people's right" where that right is thought of, in an emerging oppositional-patriot spirit, as the cornerstone of a traditional social order comprised of monarch, church, and people.[36] Dryden's notion of a good Parson cannot be endorsed by Addison because it implies a Tory theo-politics based on divine right and anti-Erastianism that the parliamentary state as established by the 1688 constitutional settlements had, as far

as the Whigs were concerned, forever displaced. Yet Addison also recognizes that the country was still dominated by Tory views and interests, and this is the point of his representation of a Tory Squire accommodating to a Whiggish reality in which social deference to private wealth and property trump the older modes of sovereignty and organic community in the ideal-typical English rural parish.

Importantly, this accommodation lies behind the rhetorical tone of Addison's passage, which I will term "soft irony." Irony, because at the level of theology and philosophy, Addison and his implied readers inhabit a different world than that of Sir Roger, and his parson and parishioners—as becomes quite clear in Mr. Spectator's meditation while walking through the wood, a conceptual journey which is beyond the rustics' capacities. Soft irony, because, nonetheless, Mr. Spectator and the villagers share a social order dominated by money and the privilege it brings, and Sir Roger's lordship of his parish is attuned to the structure of subordination and deference required by the civil society that Addison and his readers inhabit, too. This double relation between the author/reader on the one side, and the rural parish on the other, is not to be found in Richardson, as we shall see, but it is repeated, if in a somewhat different modality, by Fielding, where it helps shape his ironic treatment of the marriage plot.

PAMELA'S CLERICAL (SUB)PLOT

It is in Richardson's *Pamela*, however, that the marriage plot begins to take its modern English form. It does so in part by engaging the politics of anti-Erastianism. Following Thomas Keymer and others who have noted Richardson's Tory affiliations, I read *Pamela* as a particularly successful attempt to harness the technology of the novel to a High Church Anglican outreach project designed to disseminate practical Christianity and moral reform in resistance to Whiggish secularism.[37] Richardson's novel is written more than a decade before Hardwicke's Marriage Act, but it registers with extraordinary sensitivity the church-state tensions over the regulation of marriage that led to Hardwicke's interventions. In order fully to recognize this, however, we need to see that Richardson's marriage plot unfolds not just in terms of the courting couple—Pamela and Mr. B.—but in terms of a triangle: Pamela, Mr. B., and Mr. Williams, the clergyman who is under Mr. B.'s patronage and who plays a central role in the events that lead to his patron's marriage. Importantly, *Pamela*'s clerical subplot is set in a social landscape consisting almost solely of the squire's dependents and household—in what we might call, with Paul Morrison, the "domestic carceral."[38] That is to say, the novel's critique of the squirearchy and the system that supports it turns to practical Christianity as exemplified by Pamela and her besieged virtue, rather than to the ideal of parish life or ecclesiastical pastoralism which I have just described.

Williams is a university acquaintance of Mr. B.'s, who has taken clerical or-

ders without having been granted a living. He is awaiting the death of the elderly parson whose living Mr. B. controls, and in the meantime has charge of a school, teaching Latin, in the neighboring village. He also serves as a curate, giving occasional sermons for local incumbents. He belongs, in short, to that class of clerical subalterns who will become so important to the characterology of the sentimental novel (and not just courtship fiction) as it is develops through Parson Adams and Goldsmith's Dr. Primrose to Sterne's Yorick. And he makes his appearance once Pamela has been abducted by Mr. B. and imprisoned at his Lincolnshire estate, when she turns to him as the only person who might effectively help her—as she puts it, "I thought his cloth would set him above assisting in my ruin."[39] The pair enters into a clandestine correspondence that underscores their shared dependency and leads Williams to suggest, naturally enough, that Pamela would best escape Mr. B.'s clutches were they themselves to marry. As he writes to her:

> My whole Dependence is upon the 'Squire; and I have a near View of being provided for by his Goodness to me. But yet, I would sooner forfeit all my Hopes upon him, and trust in God for the rest, than not assist you, if possible.[40]

Yet Pamela rejects Williams's proposal out of hand—remarking in a telling phrase that suggests the troubled state of ecclesiastical spiritual authority: "Of all things, I did not love a parson."[41] That sentiment is vindicated when the vicar of the parish, Mr. Peters, more worldly-wise than Williams, and a representative of the compromised Anglican clergy, refuses to come to Pamela's aid, using these highly-charged words as reported by Williams:

> He [i.e. Mr. Peters] imputed selfish Views to me [i.e. Mr. Williams]. . . . And when I represented the Duties of our Function, &c, and protested my Disinterestedness, he coldly said, I was very good; but was a young Man, and knew little of the World. And tho' 'twas a Thing to be lamented, yet when he and I set about to reform the World in this respect, we should have enough upon our Hands; for, he said, it was too common and fashionable a Case to be withstood by a private Clergyman or two; And then he utter'd some Reflections upon the Conduct of the Fathers of the Church, in regard to the first Personages of the Realm, as a Justification of his Coldness on this score.[42]

Mr. Peters here seems to make an appeal to (Pauline/Lutheran) doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, which direct Christians to obey existing forms of secular authority. But he does so less in a political than in a moral setting, as if principled non-resistance meant non-resistance to sin itself. Mr. Peters's indifference to Pamela's plight is, of course, in keeping with the clergy's corrupt acquiescence to the squirearchy and its abandonment of its social and ethical duties. We can note that Pamela's subsequent disgust with him leads her

to shun public attendance at church and take up instead what she calls "private devotions" to sustain the piety that will allow her to declare, in a letter to Mr. Williams, that her soul is "of equal importance with the soul of a princess."[43] This is the Christian claim upon which her right to marry Mr. B. will come to rest.

When Mr. B. gets wind of Mr. Williams's scheme to help Pamela, he promptly has him imprisoned on charges of debt by falsely claiming that Williams's salary is owed to him, in a brutally effective display of secular lordly power. Later, when Mr. B. and Pamela come to an understanding, Williams is restored to favor in what unfolds as an elaborate rapprochement that requires him repeatedly to disclaim his romantic interest in Pamela. On one occasion, he undertakes an impromptu friendship ceremony with the future couple, which is orchestrated by Mr. B., who declares: "I give you *Pamela*'s Hand in Token of her Friendship and Esteem for you; and I give you mine, that I will not be your Enemy."[44] The ritual gestures toward the wedding to come and, importantly, marks a reconfiguration of Williams's status in relation to his patron, if only by allowing him to attain a degree of autonomy from within his dependency. As Pamela writes:

> For it must be always a Sign of a poor Condition [Richardson was to revise this to "dependent Condition"] to receive Obligations one cannot repay; as it is of a rich Mind, when it can confer them, without expecting or *needing* a Return. It is, on one side, the State of the human Creature compar'd, on the other, to the Creator; and so, with due Deference, may be said to be God-like, and that is the highest that can be said.[45]

Under that understanding, which Keymer astutely terms a "studied reconciliation," a church-state relation at some remove from Whiggish Erastianism is being figured, precisely because a reformed Mr. B. expects no "Return."[46] It will also allow Mr. Williams to preside over the couple's wedding ceremony on legitimate Anglican terms before finally succeeding to the living in Mr. B.'s gift.

The material details of that ceremony occupy a great deal of narrative attention. Pamela insists upon a church wedding—telling B. that the "Holy Rite" ought to be performed in a "Holy Place"—and this requires the rehabilitation of the estate's chapel which, having fallen into two generations of disuse, is "all new white-wash'd, and painted, and lin'd" and fitted with a "new Pulpit-cloth, Cushion, [and] Desk."[47] The wedding is performed privately, by license, so as not to alert Mr. B.'s family, and Pamela is attentive to every liturgical detail of the ceremony, which she conventionally calls "the Solemnity."[48] Her narration of the service carefully follows the forms mandated in the *Book of Common Prayer*, punctuating each step of the ritual—the declarations, the pledge, the ring ceremony, the joining of hands, the pronouncement, the blessing, the psalm, the prayers, and the final exhortation—with a report on her personal

sentiments in a manner that flirts with, but never quite lapses into, evangelical affect. In sum, the couple is married on an estate whose religious life and ceremonies are reinvigorated by Pamela, who has not so much subsumed Mr. Williams's pastoral influence into her new domestic role, as revitalized William's churchmanship, and in such a way that the squire's authority is, as it were, re-transcendentalized, as Toryism demands.

It should be apparent, then, that *Pamela*'s marriage plot depends upon a clerical subplot that sets in play a rivalry between Mr. B. and Williams that references larger structures of church and state by presenting the complex relations between the clergy and the rural elite. We know that the ongoing tensions between the clergy's formal responsibilities to God and Christian ideals and landowners' unprecedented legal, economic, and social influence were matters of particular concern to Richardson. His instructive coda to *Pamela*'s first edition included an exhortation to clerical readers that channeled conventional Tory "Church is in danger" rhetoric:

> Let good CLERGYMEN, in Mr. WILLIAMS, see that whatever Displeasure the doing of their Duty may give, for a Time, to their proud patrons, Providence will, at last, reward their Piety, and turn their Distresses to Triumph; and make them even more valued for a Conduct that gave Offence while the Violence of Passion lasted, than if they had meanly stoop'd to flatter or sooth the Vices of the Great.[49]

Of course, the novel itself equivocates on just this point since, as we have just seen, Mr. Williams's resistance to the squire is limited, and, in the end, serves only to heighten Mr. B.'s power and legitimacy. Yet Pamela herself is devoted precisely to Church ritual: she represents *both* an acceptance of Mr. B.'s secular authority over the Church *and* an attempt to revivify Anglicanism by returning it to its liturgies and its spiritual-moral mission. This is a combination that stands at some distance not just from Tory High Churchism but also from Methodism and, indeed, Latitudinarianism. It is precisely this combination that Lord Hardwicke, with support from sectors of the episcopate, was to deploy in the Marriage Act, if in a subtly different spirit. After all, there the state took legal control of weddings, a key mechanism of civil association, ultimately in the interests of the rich, by mandating their Anglican liturgical forms. This is not just to argue that *Pamela*'s representation of the relations between Mr. B., Mr. Williams, and Pamela allegorizes relations between the Church, the state, and civil society, but to suggest that the theo-political significance and force of Pamela's marriage can be acknowledged only when we recognize that the novel's plot and characterology engage particular contested relations between the Church and state as established in the Hanoverian constitution.

At the heart of the fiction lies Pamela herself, of course—the supremely articulate letter-writer, narrator-extraordinaire, and main agent of both the novel's plot and its efforts towards Christian reform. As such she is not wholly to

be read as a figure of abstracted social and political history because, as critics generally agree, she also represents a new social force. It is true that she takes concrete shape as a character on a terrain where social/professional groups like the clergy and the squirearchy are organized into precise political typologies and then too, of personality and ethical disposition. But if we were to position Pamela herself into the patterns of social institutions and formations called into play by the Marriage Act, it is obvious enough that she—as the reward in a very uneven struggle between vicar and squire—stands for the object of governmentality itself: the reproductive body of the nation. More to the point, she represents a feminized, highly literate, spiritualizing force, capable of disseminating moral reformation which cannot quite be contained within the bounds of either church or state, even though it is connected to, and connects, both. In these terms, the social being of the force that Pamela expresses is the institution of literature itself. Indeed, in the novel, what takes the place of the absent rural parish as community is the implied national readership for Pamela's letters. By implication the nation is not being imagined as the aggregate of local parishes under the authority of rural clergy but as the space over which the print market for devotional literature—fictional or otherwise—extends. Whereas, in Addison, that space itself is personified in Mr. Spectator, here it exists only extra-diegetically, or structurally, so as to abolish any Addisonian irony. The spiritually and morally invigorating power of literature as exemplified by Pamela was too important to be diminished by irony. It constructed a new moral authority, rooted in conventional forms of Tory opposition, yet able freshly to engage and redirect the forces of Whig hegemony.

THE PATRIOT MARRIAGE PLOT

I have argued that church-state relations underpin the Richardsonian marriage plot in which ecclesiastical contestations of state power are presented as vicar-squire rivalries. Pamela's marriage to Mr. B. requires not only Mr. Williams's ceremonial legitimation but also a series of delicate negotiations between squire and parson over Pamela's person. By means of this triangulation, the novel confers a public and religious significance on Pamela's marriage missed by orthodox critical understandings of its class and gender implications. In particular, we can understand Richardson's presentation of the Anglican wedding as, in part, a means to imagine a resacrilization of everyday life in the face of an otherwise unassailable Whig hegemony. Furthermore, by anticipating marriage's status as an institution of both church and state in the terms just outlined, Richardson's plot elevates the cultural status of the novel form itself. It does so by sketching the terms within which its literary power can mediate between faith and citizenship inside the Erastian nation-state.

The latent nation-building (as against state-building) tendencies of Richardson's marriage plot, however, are more fully realized in mid-century opposi-

tional Whig and Tory novels—namely Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742), John Shebbeare's *The Marriage Act* (1754), and Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). All are satiric-sentimental responses to Richardson, which place the marriage plot front and centre of their "Patriot" visions of the rejuvenated English landed estate. They do so by radically foregrounding Richardson's clerical subplot, presenting the squirearchy as godless ("Whiggish") libertines disempowered or reformed under the influence not now of an articulate, plebian, Anglican High-Church young woman, but of Tory vicars typically figured under the trope of complex irony as unworldly, benevolent, learned men. Like Mr. Williams, they eventually come to officiate over the weddings of the protagonists or other central characters and share in the largesse of an ending in which injustices are put right and virtue is rewarded. Here, in the context of what we might think of as a conservative, masculine reconstitution of Richardson's marriage plot, the Pamela character gives way to the good-natured Anglican vicar as the sentimental novel's primary vehicle for literary-conjugal values embedded in an imagined community that is (once again) distinctly Anglican, but this time based more explicitly on the idealized, morally-unified rural parish.

Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* breaks with *Pamela* precisely by absorbing and reconfiguring the core components of the latter's clerical subplot. The novel places a country cleric, Parson Adams, at its moral and religious center instead of Pamela, thereby disarticulating its romantic from its ethical agent, so that it is now Adams who insists upon proper nuptial ritual. Joseph and Fanny marry by banns rather than informally or by license: their wedding ceremony, unlike Pamela's, is a collective public celebration, and in his role as celebrant Adams refuses to tolerate any squirearchical interference or irreverence. (He conducts the wedding in the neighboring parish so as to foil Lady Booby's attempts to prevent it, and publicly rebukes Squire Booby for laughing during the ceremony).

The novel is also set in relatively concrete social locations, of which the most significant is Adams's country parish. Adams is a parson whose most important relations are pastoral, whereas, beyond his attachment to Pamela, Williams seems to have no pastoral connections at all: this difference marking Fielding's patriot-Country affiliation with some precision. At the same time, formally, the novel departs from Richardson's epistolary mode, characterized by a melodramatic opposition between good and evil, to a "comic-epic" third-person narrative presented through an irony that includes almost all its action and characters. That shift of narratological perspective enables the novel to cover the wider social settings and relations required by its Country-populist pastoralism, not just through irony but also through a rhetoric of objectivity lacking in Richardson. Last and perhaps most importantly, the plot closes neatly in Fanny and Joseph's wedding, which represents a restoration of an older literary convention that *Pamela* had eschewed.

These dimensions of Fielding's revision of the marriage plot can best be

understood as joining a coherent project by focusing on Adams. He is an impoverished member of the Tory subaltern clergy, once again committed to a traditional Anglicanism. Unlike his predecessor, Williams, he is an intellectual and theologian. Thus, for instance, he spells out his divinity to Joseph at a moment when Joseph has been beaten up and, as he thinks, has lost Fanny to a libertine squire. Adams delivers a sermon on the need for submission to pain, characteristically losing sight of Joseph's agony as his discourse takes wing: "You are a Man," he tells Joseph, "and consequently a Sinner; and this may be a Punishment to you for Sins; indeed, in this Sense it may be esteemed a Good, yea as the greatest Good, which satisfies the Anger of Heaven, and averts that Wrath which cannot continue without our Destruction."[50] This is a classic statement of Anglican political theology for which rebellion against social injustice is disallowed, but it is entirely free of the corruption and self-interest it licensed in the case of *Pamela*'s Mr. Peters. Indeed, Fielding's novel tells of injustice after injustice heaped upon the poor—including Adams himself—by the rich, that is by the Whiggish oligarchy. But—and this is key—Adams's divinity comes attached to the respect and affection he inspires in his parishioners and which the various other divines in the novel conspicuously fail to inspire. At the same time, it comes attached to Adams's utter naivety and unworldliness, much of the novel's comedy being sparked by his Quixotic failure to understand when he is being condescended to or abused, or indeed when he fails to comprehend the ways of the world at all. Thus, for instance, he falsely believes that the sermons he aims to sell to the London booksellers will make his fortune, oblivious to the contemporary transformation of the book trade recently apparent in *Pamela*'s success.

So the distance between Parson Adams and the secular world orders the text's irony. The populist, impoverished Tory minister is a centre of a spiritual and social goodness that is nourished and acted upon in the parish, but which, if not exactly useless, is ineffective in the face of oligarchic authority and wealth. Importantly, that ineffectiveness is also given narrative expression in the novel's romance closure, that is, in its ending in a wedding. The ceremony is depicted as allowing Adams possession of a religious authority directly transmitted from God: he is particularly happy to officiate at Joseph and Fanny's marriage because he "saw an Opportunity of fulfilling the Church forms, and marrying his Parishioners without a Licence," that is to perform the ceremony according to canon law by calling banns and without the need to seek the permission of church superiors.[51] As such, the wedding magically reconciles the community, salving civic discord through religious ritual.

How to understand this text, which closes in a wedding ceremony that, once again, obeys all the proper liturgical forms and is officiated by a Tory parson? A parson who is much loved by parishioners living in a parish imagined as other to the spaces native to the Whig oligarchy. Yet a parson who has also forfeited worldliness, who has invested in traditional submission, and is presented

through consistent authorial irony? At one level, as should now be apparent, the parish wedding is a fit climax for a text that is resisting the state-endorsed resacralization embraced by Richardson in the name of a populist rural Anglicanism, centered on Adams and in effect presented as the essence of country Englishness itself. But on another level, because of the text's irony, it is as if the parish is styled not as a practically political force but as an ideological one, as if Country politics were, once again—if in another mode than Richardson's—moving from the domain of statecraft to that of fiction and the imagination.

In these terms, the marriage ceremony also foregrounds the utopianism and nostalgia of the novel's project precisely by neatly and magically sealing its plot. In applying a mode of closure drawn from romance and classical comedy onto a highly socially engaged and mimetic text, the "comic epic in prose" concedes the fictionality of its theo-politics and legitimates its own displacement from practical politics into the ideological. That is why its irony costs so little. And why Richardson's *Pamela* never makes such a concession, since its heroine's virtue, attached to Mr. B's reformation and Mr. Williams's rise in social status, earnestly solicits readerly emulation. We can say, then, that the modern English marriage plot draws its original conditions of possibility, along with its forms and meanings, exactly where Richardson and Fielding intersect. That is, where English theo-politics produces a Christian literature committed to emulative fictions, on the one side, and a literature committed to the parish-based imaginary of a certain nostalgic English nationalism, on the other.

NOTES

1. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Letter of 20 October 1752, *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, ed. Lord Wharncliffe (London, 1837), III:38. Montagu had earlier remarked that *Pamela* was "the joy of the chambermaids of all nations" (25 October 1749, II:389).

2. Following from Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley, 1957), the most influential of such accounts include Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York, 1987); Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (Baltimore, 1987), and *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, 2005); and Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace 1670–1820* (Berkeley,1994).

3. Watt's chapter on *Pamela*, entitled "Love and the Novel" (140–79), remains the most compelling and influential account of the marriage plot's centrality to the development of the novel form. More recent scholarship includes: Joseph Allen Boone's *Tradition Counter Tradition: Love and the Form of Fiction*, (Chicago, 1987); Katherine Sobba Green, *The Courtship Novel 1740–1820: A Feminized Genre* (Lexington, 1991); Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Fictions of Modesty: Women and Courtship in the English Novel* (Chicago, 1991); John P. Zomchick, *Family and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: The Public Conscience in the Private Sphere* (Cambridge, 1993); Christopher Flint, *Family Fictions: Narrative and Domestic Relations in Britain, 1688–1798* (Stanford, 1998); Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* (Baltimore, 2000); Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748–1818* (Cambridge, 2004); Wendy

S. Jones *Consensual Fictions: Women, Liberalism, and the English Novel* (Toronto, 2005); and Helen Thompson, *Ingenuous Subjection: Compliance and Power in the Eighteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (Philadelphia, 2005). While these accounts construct different lineages for the marriage plot, and offer a rich variety of interpretive approaches, their modes of contextualization are, for the most part, social, literary, and legal.

4. See Lisa O'Connell, "The Theo-Political Origins of the English Marriage Plot," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 43, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 31–37. That essay includes an abbreviation of the reading of *Pamela*'s clerical subplot offered here.

5. See Margaret Anne Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (New Brunswick, 1996), 67–72 for a discussion of ancient marriage and literature. For Aristotle, see *Poetics*, trans. Malcolm Heath (London, 1996), 9. On traditional comic form and its conventional resolution in festive ritual, most commonly a wedding or multiple weddings, see Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, 1957), 163–65.

6. Charlotte Elizabeth Morgan, *The Rise of the Novel of Manners: A Study of English Prose Fiction between 1600 and 1740* (New York, 1911), 3.

7. Samuel Richardson speaks of *Pamela* as introducing "a new species of writing" in a 1741 letter to Aaron Hill (*Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Carroll [Oxford, 1964], 41). The phrase is soon applied to Henry Fielding as well. See [Frances Coventry], *An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding* (1751), ed. Alan D. McKillop, Augustan Reprint Society, no. 95 (Berkeley, 1962).

8. Walter Scott, *Lives of the Eminent Novelists and Dramatists* (London, 1886), 398.

9. For instance, Delarivière Manley offered a critique of romance not unlike Scott's in her preface to *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705). On pre-Richardsonian claims to "historicity," see Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684–1740* (Oxford, 1992), 49–53. For the most part, as Ballaster suggests, early female fiction writers broke new ground for the novel genre by drawing upon and reinventing contemporary French iterations of the romance tradition for their English audiences.

10. Toni O'Shaughnessy Bowers makes this compelling claim in "Sex, Lies, and Invisibility: Amatory Fiction from the Restoration to Mid-Century," *The Columbia History of the British Novel*, ed. John J. Richetti (New York, 1994), 50–72, 58. Paula R. Backscheider demonstrates Haywood's importance to the history of the novel in "The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels," *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work*, ed. Kristen T. Saxon and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington, 2000), 19–47. See also Richetti, "Amatory Fiction: Behn, Manley, Haywood," *The English Novel in History 1700–1800* (London, 1999), 18–51.

11. On *Pamela*'s contemporary reception, see Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor, eds., *The Pamela Controversy: Criticisms and Adaptations of Samuel Richardson's Pamela, 1740–1750*, 6 vols. (London, 2001). See also Keymer and Sabor, *'Pamela' in the Marketplace* (Cambridge, 2005); James Grantham Turner, "Novel Panic: Picture and Performance in the Reception of Richardson's Pamela," *Representations* 48 (Fall 1994): 70–96; and William Beatty Warner, "The Pamela Media Event," *Licensing Entertainment: the Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684–1750* (Berkeley, 1998), 176–231.

12. Richetti, *The English Novel in History*, 84. See also Keymer's introduction to *Pamela, Or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Keymer and Alice Wakely (London, 2001), 3–5; and David Blewett, "Introduction to Reconsidering the Rise of the Novel," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 12 (2000): 141–45.

13. My own line of argument endorses Watt's sense of the significance of Richardson's marriage plot for the history of the novel but not his progressive account of its origins. For Watt, Pamela's unlikely marriage to her master stands as a literary trope for the transformations of modernity and marks the English novel's departure from the feudalism of the romance tradition (173–79).

14. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, 1992).

15. Qtd. in P. C. Yorke, *The Life and Correspondence of Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain* (Cambridge, 1913), II:65.

16. W. M. Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), 11.

17. See K. D. M. Snell, *Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700–1950* (Cambridge, 2006).

18. See Jacob, 9–12, 191–96; and Tindal A. Hart, *The Eighteenth-Century Country Parson (Circa 1689–1830)* (Shrewsbury, 1955), 5.

19. See Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689–1798* (Oxford, 1991), 568–69. As G. F. A. Best has argued, by 1740, squire and parson were increasingly allied, generating "a new version of establishment theory, emphasizing the social affinities between clergy and laity, tending to glorify their interconnections and mutual dependence" (qtd. in Alan D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel, and Social Change, 1740–1914* [London, 1976], 13).

20. Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 21 (24 March 1711), *The Spectator*, ed. Gregory Smith (London, 1970), 1:63. According to Geoffrey Holmes, at any one time, about two thirds of all clergy belonged to the subaltern class (i.e. were curates or vicars of indigent parishes and thereby condemned to more or less genteel poverty). A proportion of these remained unbeneficed throughout their whole career (*Politics, Religion, and Society in England, 1679–1742* [London, 1986], 83). See also Norman Sykes, *Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century* (Hamden, CT, 1934), 206–09.

21. John Dryden, "The Character of a Good Parson," *Fables Ancient and Modern Translated into Verse from Homer, Ovid, Boccace, & Chaucer* (London, 1700), 531–36.

22. See James Kinsley, "Dryden's 'Character of a Good Parson' and Bishop Ken," *The Review of English Studies*, New Series 3, no. 10 (1952): 155–58; and Austin C. Dobbins, "Dryden's 'Character of a Good Parson': Background and Interpretation," *Studies in Philology* 53, no. 1 (1956): 51–59.

23. Dryden, 531, 535, 531.

24. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 106 (2 July 1711), 1:325.

25. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 112 (9 July 1711), 1:340.

26. See Sykes, 234–35; and Jacob, 209–19.

27. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 106, 1:325.

28. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 106, 1:325.

29. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 106, 1:325.

30. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 112, 1:340.

31. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 112, 1:341.

32. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 111 (7 July 1711), 1:337–39.

33. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 112, 1:342.

34. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 112, 1:342.

35. Dryden, 534, 536.

36. Dryden, 536.

37. Keymer, "Introduction," *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford, 2001), xix–xx, and *Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge, 1992), 168–70. See also Doody, "Richardson's Politics," *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 2, no. 2 (1990): 113–26. Recently drawing on some of the same scholarly sources, Carol Stewart reads Richardson as a Whig erastian author and *Pamela* as "an enactment of Latitudinarian thinking" (*The Eighteenth-Century Novel and the Secularization of Ethics* [Farnham, 2010], 33). In my view, however, Stewart too easily passes over the complexity of the period's theo-politics and of Richardson's own affiliations, for, if Richardson came to endorse the Whig hegemony of the 1740s and 1750s, he did so having once held oppositional views, as Keymer and Doody note. Similarly, if we are to read Mr. Williams as a secularizing, Latitudinarian divine, as Stewart suggests, then we cannot adequately account for his victimization at Mr. B.'s hands, or for the extraordinary tension between the two men. My own reading, by contrast, foregrounds Richardson's use of the vicar-squire trope as a means of more fully understanding the literary implications of his shifting political

allegiances which were consistently colored, nonetheless, by residual High Church sympathies.

38. Paul Morrison, "Enclosed in Openness: Northanger Abbey and the Domestic Carceral," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 33, no. 3 (Spring 1991): 1–23.

39. Richardson, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Keymer and Wakely (Oxford, 2001), 111.

40. Richardson, 128.

41. Richardson, 143.

42. Richardson, 134–35.

43. Richardson, 140, 158.

44. Richardson, 306.

45. Richardson, 273.

46. Keymer, "Introduction," xx. Keymer observes the accommodation between Mr. B. and Mr. Williams, but offers no sustained account of its significance or literary precedents.

47. Richardson, 276, 304. In its restored glory, the chapel will become a spiritual center of the estate, a private sanctified space, served by its own private chaplain (a position that will go to Williams) who will regularly perform the "Divine Service" there, in a move that precisely marks Pamela (and Richardson) as High Church supporters of the extension of Eucharist into ordinary church going.

48. Richardson, 341.

49. Richardson, 500–501.

50. Fielding, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. Judith Hawley (London, 1999), 265.

51. Fielding, 331.

seum, Greenwich, where he is writing a book on the physical, neurological, and emotional symptoms of scurvy, provisionally entitled *Scurvy: The Disease of Discovery*.

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